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Letter dated 7 December 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the decision adopted by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union at its 40th meeting, held in Addis Ababa on 6 October 2005. I also refer to Security Council resolution 1633 (2005) of 21 October 2005, which established an International Working Group to assist the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in the implementation of its programme and to consolidate and strengthen the existing follow-up mechanisms.

In this regard, I am forwarding the text of the communiqué issued by the International Working Group at the conclusion of its eleventh ministerial meeting, held in Abidjan on 1 December 2006 (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would bring this communiqué to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Final communiqué of the eleventh ministerial meeting of the International Working Group on Côte d'Ivoire

Abidjan, 1 December 2006

1. The 1st ministerial meeting of the International Working Group after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1721 (2006) of 1 November 2006 was held at Abidjan on 1 December 2006 under the joint chairmanship of Rodolphe Adada, Minister of State, Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Francophonie of the Congo, and Pierre Schori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Côte d'Ivoire. In attendance were the Ministers of France and Ghana, as well as the Special Representative of the current Chairman of the African Union, the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States, the High Representative for Elections in Côte d'Ivoire and the representatives of Benin, Guinea, the Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie and the World Bank.

2. The Group was briefed by the Prime Minister on the initial measures he has taken or envisaged to take towards carrying out the immediate tasks spelled out in Security Council resolution 1721 (2006) and the obstacles he has encountered. The Group provided the Prime Minister, at his request, with appropriate clarifications concerning the authority vested in him by the Security Council in its resolution 1721 (2006) over the Defence and Security Forces and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles. The Group recalled the obligation bestowed on it to report immediately to the Security Council any obstacle or problem that the Prime Minister might encounter in the exercise of his functions and to identify those responsible. The International Working Group also stated that the Prime Minister, at his convenience, will judge, in all matters, whether it is opportune for him to take the necessary decisions either in the Council of Ministers or in the Council of Government.

3. The Group notes with deep concern the delay already registered in implementing resolution 1721 (2006) and the deterioration of the political climate, which is linked largely to the handling of the severe toxic waste crisis. The Group encourages the Prime Minister to pursue his efforts to fight impunity and promote good governance and, in this regard, it welcomes the recommendations made by the National Commission of Inquiry into the dumping of toxic waste and understands the deep dissatisfaction felt by the population over the reinstatement of officials who had been suspended by the Prime Minister.

4. The Group recalls that in resolution 1721 (2006), the Security Council calls for full compliance by all Ivorian parties and that no legal provisions should be invoked by them to obstruct the peace process.

5. The Group also recalls paragraph 21 of the decision of 17 October 2006 of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, which "urges all Ivorian parties to exercise maximum restraint, work together to overcome the current stalemate and refrain from any unilateral action during the transition period". In this regard, the

Group condemns the dismissal of the directors-general of the Radio Télévision Ivoirienne and Fraternité Matin as well as the dissolution of the Boards of Directors of the companies concerned. The Group notes that these decisions, which are contrary to the Pretoria Agreement, undermine the neutrality and impartiality of the public media, which are guaranteed by the peace agreements, as well as freedom of expression. The Group therefore considers that it is indispensable to reinstate the dismissed officials.

6. Bearing in mind the assessment of the peace process scheduled to be conducted by 1 February 2007 and while encouraging the Prime Minister in his determination to fully implement Security Council resolution 1721 (2006), the Group invites him to take or initiate the following immediate measures:

(a) **Relaunching of the process of pre-identification**: the Government and the relevant authorities should immediately relaunch the issuing of substitute birth certificates and certificates of nationality in the existing jurisdictions. At the same time, the Government must create the necessary conditions for the pre-identification process throughout the national territory, including the adoption of the required regulatory texts to render the process efficient and the assigning of judges to the new jurisdictions. These measures should be taken by 10 December 2006 at the latest. The preparations for the identification project, in particular the selection of the technical operator and a public information campaign, should be aimed at ensuring that the registration of the population can begin on 1 February 2007.

(b) **Identification of the population**: the working group on identification will have to be established by 5 December 2006 at the latest.

(c) **Preparations for the elections**: the Group requests those political actors who have not yet done so to nominate their representatives on the local structures of the Independent Electoral Commission before 15 December 2006. After 15 December 2006, the Independent Electoral Commission must open all its local structures, including those comprising the nominated members. The Group requests the Commission to urgently set and publish an electoral timetable, including the date for the first round of the presidential election.

(d) **Disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants, dismantling and disarmament of militias**: the Group demands that the parties controlling the militias and ex-combatants fully participate in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the dismantling and disarmament of militia processes led by the Prime Minister. The rehabilitation of the sites must be completed by 15 January 2007.

(e) **Reform of the security sector**: the Working Group on the reform of the security sector should also be set up by 5 December 2006 at the latest, and the dates of the national seminar should be announced at the same time.

(f) **Code of Conduct for the Media**: pursuant to paragraph 19 of resolution 1721 (2006), the Prime Minister should publish a code of conduct for the media by 15 December 2006 at the latest, and should take immediate measures with a view to its effective application.

7. Within this context, the Group feels that the impartial forces should contribute, as a priority, to ensuring the security of the electoral process, particularly in its

pre-identification and identification phases, as well as that of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process.

8. The Group affirms its determination to continue to work with all the Ivorian parties with a view to contributing to a rapid resolution of the crisis, in keeping with its role as guarantor and impartial arbiter of the peace process. The Group recommends to the African Union mediation to initiate urgently the necessary actions to restore a climate conducive to ending the crisis.

9. The Group also reminds all Ivorian parties that it is determined to recommend to the Security Council the implementation of appropriate sanctions against any person who might obstruct the effective start-up of the implementation of resolution 1721 (2006), including through incitements to hatred and violence.

10. Recalling the provisions of paragraph 31 of resolution 1721 (2006) concerning the individual responsibility of the members of the Defence and Security Forces of Cote d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles, whatever their rank, in the implementation of the peace process, the Group condemns the repeated impediments to and obstruction of the freedom of movement of the impartial forces and, in particular, the refusal by the Republican Guard to grant staff of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire in charge of the security of the Prime Minister access to the compound of the Office of the Prime Minister, as was the case on 1 December. Those responsible for this inadmissible incident will be reported to the Security Council Sanctions Committee.

11. The Group will hold its next meeting on 12 January 2007 in Côte d'Ivoire.